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Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Wednesday, 13 July 1994, at 10 a.m.

President : Mr. TEJERA PARIS (Venezuela)
(Vice-President)

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Coordination segment

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In the absence of the President, Mr. Tejera Paris (Venezuela), Vice-President, took the chair.

The meeting was called to order at 10.20 a.m.

COORDINATION OF THE POLICIES AND ACTIVITIES OF THE SPECIALIZED AGENCIES AND OTHER BODIES OF THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM RELATED TO THE FOLLOWING THEME: (continued)

(c) IMPLEMENTATION OF THE AGREED CONCLUSIONS OF THE 1993 COORDINATION SEGMENT OF THE COUNCIL RELATING TO (i) THE COORDINATION OF HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE: EMERGENCY RELIEF AND THE CONTINUUM TO REHABILITATION AND DEVELOPMENT (A/49/177-E/1994/80)

Mr. HANSEN (Under-Secretary-General for humanitarian Affairs, Emergency Relief Coordinator) introduced the report of the Secretary-General on the strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance to the United Nations (A/49/177-E/1994/80). The Department of Humanitarian Affairs, through strong support from the organizations of the United Nations system, other humanitarian entities and non-governmental organizations, had developed a sound partnership, aimed at ensuring that emergency assistance not only saved lives, but led to the earliest resumption of sustainable development activities. The Department's work in facilitating the overall response by allocating responsibilities among the humanitarian organizations, leading assessment missions to determine urgent needs and ensuring adequate field coordination was well recognized by relief organizations and non-governmental organizations. The Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) was a key instrument for enhancing cooperation among humanitarian partners and had demonstrated its potential for quick action response to emergencies. He suggested that IASC could be instrumental in establishing a more systematic dialogue between relief organizations and Governments to coordinate bilateral and multilateral assistance and identify gaps in resources or programmes.

An essential component for effective cooperation was good leadership and support for coordination at the field level. While the United Nations system had many experienced personnel working in the field on development issues, recent experiences had shown that complex qualified leadership was required on a full-time basis for emergencies. As the Emergency Relief Coordinator, he intended to consult fully with members of IASC to appoint coordinators for humanitarian assistance for all such emergencies. The United Nations resident coordinator and the in-country disaster management team should continue to be the first line of response to disasters and emergencies. Measures to strengthen the capacity of the resident coordinator system were needed

(Mr. Hansen)

to improve coordination of humanitarian assistance. In order to ensure that coordination structures in the field were well defined and to avoid excessive layering in the chain of command, he proposed that, in situations where the Emergency Relief Coordinator, together with IASC, found it necessary to appoint a humanitarian coordinator outside the resident coordinator system, that he or she should also be designated as resident coordinator. In that regard, he appreciated the continued support for coordination provided by operational organizations through secondment of staff which promoted greater team spirit and more coherent programmes.

Emergency needs continued to grow dramatically, putting severe constraints on resources available through operational organizations. The Central Emergency Revolving Fund (CERF) had provided urgently needed resources for emergency actions, disbursing over $95 million in two years. Despite the efforts of the Department and the operational agencies to accelerate the reimbursement to CERF, the level of resources continued to be dangerously low. Past experience had shown that it was difficult to secure quicker reimbursement of contributions, and he, therefore, strongly recommended increasing the size of CERF.

In addition to sufficient resources and capacity, three crucial factors were required for the provision of humanitarian assistance, namely, gaining access to populations in need of emergency assistance, ensuring the security of relief personnel and supplies in conflict situations and finding lasting solutions to the root causes of many complex emergencies. Those elements required close interaction between humanitarian, peace-making and peace-keeping activities, referred to as vertical coordination. In many instances humanitarian actions played a crucial role in facilitating political processes and improving security conditions, in turn, vertical coordination ensured the neutrality of humanitarian action. While IASC was elaborating a set of general principles to guide humanitarian actions in conflict situations, a closer working relationship was being developed at Headquarters between the Department of Peace-keeping Operations and the Department of Humanitarian Affairs. Finally, the Department of Humanitarian Affairs was in the process of adopting measures to achieve greater clarity and greater accountability in its organizational structure and to strengthen consultative processes with its humanitarian partners.

Mr. BELHIMEUR (Observer for Algeria), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that his delegation was pleased to note that considerable efforts had been made to implement General Assembly resolution 48/57. The Inter-Agency Standing Committee had played an increasingly active role in establishing greater coordination of United Nations activities to ensure a more timely emergency response. Efforts to develop rapid-response procedures for international emergencies and to design a system to improve information management were helping to establish a more coordinated and timely intervention at all levels.

However, his delegation expressed concern with the lack of sufficient financial resources to meet the needs of the growing number of conflict-affected individuals. The dangerously low level of resources in the Central Emergency Revolving Fund threatened its very existence. Urgent measures were needed to ensure that reimbursements were made on a regular basis and to increase the size of CERF by calling for additional contributions from donor countries. Secondly, in paragraph 12 of his report (A/49/177-E/1994/80), the Secretary-General indicated that consultations were being carried out regarding the appointment of humanitarian assistance coordinators. The Group of 77 and China, which had not taken part in those consultations, had already expressed their reservations regarding that topic and hoped that the relevant General Assembly resolutions would be respected.

With regard to the link between emergency actions and development, to state in paragraph 83 of the report, that consistent and assured funding was a prerequisite for a successful transition from relief to development, was to implicitly acknowledge that it was impossible to ensure that function and also avoid lasting dependence on external assistance, a situation that the Secretary-General had warned against. In conclusion, his delegation wished to emphasize the importance of two principles contained in General Assembly resolution 46/182, namely, that the sovereignty, territorial integrity and national unity of States should be fully respected, and that the consent of the affected country should always be obtained when providing humanitarian assistance.

Mr. DETLEV GRAF ZU RANTZAU (Germany), speaking on behalf of the European Union, said that it noted with concern the increasing number, magnitude and complexity of natural disasters and emergencies. As a response to those challenges, the European Union had shouldered the lion's share of the world humanitarian aid effort. It was gratified to perceive, therefore, a

(Mr. Detlev Graf zu Rantzau, Germany)

strengthening in the international acceptance of the leadership role of the Secretary-General through the Emergency Relief Coordinator. Broad participation of United Nations agencies, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations had added to the emergency response capacity in the field and promoted issues relating to the continuum from emergency relief to rehabilitation and development. The situation in Rwanda clearly showed the need for an immediate and effective coordination of humanitarian assistance. In Angola as well, the office of the Humanitarian Coordinator and the humanitarian agencies had supported each other's work, which had made both more effective.

The role of the Emergency Relief Coordinator should, however, be clearly defined in accordance with General Assembly resolution 46/182. Structural adjustments must be made for an efficient and result-oriented division of labour commensurate with the overall mandate of the Department of Humanitarian Affairs. The European Union urged the Secretary-General to provide the fullest possible support to that Department through adequate staffing and regular budget resources. Its restructuring should be judged from the perspective of increased efficiency and performance.

Consolidated inter-agency appeals had achieved a comprehensive format, and the European Union strongly supported that process. Broad and active participation, however, required rapid assessment, prioritization of projects and realistic projection of relief requirements. The consolidated appeals process should be further streamlined to allow for faster reaction to incipient emergency situations and to allow individual projects to be more easily identified. The recently adopted practice of addressing emergency needs for immediate reaction separately from projects that moved towards rehabilitation and development seemed to be a step in the right direction.

The Inter-Agency Standing Committee under the leadership of the Emergency Relief Coordinator, was the primary mechanism for inter-agency coordination of policy issues in humanitarian assistance and for formulating a coherent and timely response to complex emergencies. IASC should meet more frequently and should be more action-oriented, and interested Governments should be informed about its meetings.

The European Union welcomed the decision to expand the scope of the Central Emergency Revolving Fund to include the International Organization for Migration. It endorsed the provisions of General Assembly resolution 48/57

(Mr. Detlev Graf zu Rantzau, Germany)

which stressed the need to retain the revolving nature of the Fund, inter alia, through timely reimbursement from contributions received.

The European Union gave its full support to the initiatives undertaken by the Emergency Relief Coordinator when called upon to act as a humanitarian advocate, and emphasized his role in ensuring that the humanitarian dimension was taken into account in overall planning of response to emergencies. In order to overcome the problems underlying most man-made disasters, however, political solutions were called for. Furthermore, the European Union fully supported measures taken to secure the safety of humanitarian relief workers.

Mr. INDERFURTH (United States of America) said that, as the number of crises to which the international community was called upon to respond continued to grow, it was faced with an ever-increasing burden in resolving conflicts and meeting the humanitarian needs of civilians. The United Nations had spent more on peace-keeping in 1993 than in the previous 45 years combined; that trend was unsustainable and could be reversed only through concerted action. The United States strongly supported the implementation of the Council's agreed conclusions. It applauded the efforts to appoint appropriate humanitarian coordinators with field experience in emergency relief and urged the Department of Humanitarian Affairs and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) especially to agree quickly on arrangements which would provide the best humanitarian coordinator for each crisis. It suggested the implementation of an information system to quantify and track needs and their response, which was crucial for saving lives. His Government was already contributing to that effort through funding of the International Emergency Readiness and Response Information System project. His Government urged the dispatching of military and civilian experts from Member States to the Department of Humanitarian Affairs and the specialized agencies in times of crisis. His Government would prepare a data bank of American personnel and technical resources to assist in the implementation of the agreed conclusions on preparedness and urged other Member States to do the same.

Coordination could be improved in the area of post-conflict transition to a more stable society. In order for peace-keeping operations to conclude successfully, programmes must be put into place to assist in the reintegration of former combatants into civilian life. The Department of Humanitarian

(Mr. Inderfurth, USA)

Affairs, UNDP and other agencies must clarify the responsibilities for demobilization and integration of combatants and, where necessary, de-mining operations. The United States wished to see a unified strategy for addressing the many complex problems along the continuum through rehabilitation and reconstruction to development. Consultations between United Nations agencies involved in the delivery of humanitarian assistance and Governments should be intensified.

It had been demonstrated that inter-agency cooperation under the leadership of the Department of Humanitarian Affairs could result in improved coordination in the field, as in Rwanda and Angola. In particular, his delegation wished to underline the achievements of the inter-agency advance humanitarian team which had entered Rwanda soon after the fighting had erupted. The team had assessed the situation, restarted the delivery of humanitarian relief, gained the support of the peace-keeping forces on the ground and met with parties to seek access to those in need. The concept of an inter-agency rapid response team should be institutionalized and put into practice more often. The use of funds from the Central Emergency Revolving Fund for that purpose had obviously succeeded in saving lives, and should continue.

The United States remained prepared to do its part to increase the effectiveness of the United Nations in responding to humanitarian crises and assisting countries emerging from agonizing conflict.

Mr. BAILLARGEON (Canada) said that the report of the Secretary-General (A/49/177-E/1994/80) had highlighted the need to define clearly the role of the Department of Humanitarian Affairs and had indicated that the new leadership was taking steps to ensure that the Department operated more efficiently and productively, and that the desired synergy was established among all partners. Now that the period of institutional organization was reaching its conclusion, attention should be focused on the Department's activities in the field.

While his delegation viewed the Secretary-General's report as encouraging, it noted that two essential elements expressly called for in General Assembly resolution 48/57 were lacking. The first element was a request contained in paragraph 11 of that resolution to establish special coordination arrangements to enable a rapid response in the initial stage of an emergency, for which IASC was to make specific recommendations so that the Economic and Social Council could make a final decision on the matter. The

(Mr. Baillargeon, Canada)

second element regarded the eventual increase of the Central Emergency Revolving Fund. Until consultations with potential donors were conducted, the Council could not rule on that matter. Therefore, in order to comply with those two requests, it would be necessary to hold a resumed session of the Economic and Social council prior to the consideration of those items by the General Assembly at its forty-ninth session.

Mr. McKINNON (Observer for New Zealand) said that the discussion in the Secretary-General's report on the interaction between the political, humanitarian and security dimensions of complex emergencies had been very useful. That area involved important issues of principle, and clear direction from Member States was needed. Where a political or security breakdown was the root cause of an emergency, the political, security and humanitarian aspects could not be dealt with in isolation. In those situations, which were unfortunately becoming frequent, coordination must be directed at injecting the appropriate humanitarian perspectives into overall United Nations efforts in peace-keeping.

In his report, the Secretary-General had coupled that aspect with the objective of preserving the unique identity and the neutrality and impartiality of the humanitarian component of peace-keeping operations. Such operations themselves were neutral and impartial, and from that they derived their strength and authority. There was a risk of political involvement in their humanitarian component, but the problems could not be solved by separating that component from overall United Nations efforts. A political effort was required to achieve a solution. The solution to coordination issues lay in ensuring the full integration of the humanitarian component at both the decision-making and at the operational levels. At the decision-making level, the Department of Humanitarian Affairs had an important responsibility to communicate the humanitarian aspects clearly and effectively to Member States and the Security Council. At the operational level, there was a need for close interaction among the political, peace-keeping and humanitarian components of an operation. He was pleased that IASC had established procedures for cooperation, information, joint planning and logistical and operational guidelines for the field.

Regarding cooperation in the field, the decision by UNDP to expand the number of individuals qualified to serve as field coordinators had been a

(Mr. McKinnon, New Zealand)

sensible one. Arrangements for field coordination should build on the resident coordinator system to the extent possible so as to avoid the creation of parallel field structures.

Regarding the safety of personnel, his delegation hoped that the ad hoc Committee would complete elaboration of the new mechanism for the protection of personnel, including humanitarian relief personnel. On the subject of land mines, he was stunned by the immense scale of the problem - 90 million land mines were left in the ground in many areas throughout the world. New Zealand had deployed a mine clearance team to Afghanistan and was preparing to send one to Mozambique.

Mr. OKALI (United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat)) said that, because of its activities in the reconstruction and rehabilitation of settlements in the aftermath of natural and man-made disasters, Habitat had been invited to become a member of the IASC task force on the relief-to-development continuum, with the aim of developing a conceptual and operational clarification of the continuum and establishing an operational framework for inter-agency cooperation. Recent operational activities in Afghanistan, Somalia, Southern Lebanon, Rwanda and Burundi reflected Habitat's current focus on assistance to countries affected by war and civil strife.

Conscious that a more comprehensive United Nations response and inter-agency cooperation in humanitarian assistance would yield better results and increase the scope of assistance rendered, Habitat had joined forces with the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), also located in Nairobi. Those agencies had established a joint task force on the relief-to-development continuum. Their cooperation had already resulted in identification and appraisal of complementary continuum expertise and experience, its dissemination to the rest of the United Nations system and interested Governments, joint missions in Kenya and Burundi and proposals for future joint missions to Mexico and Guatemala and to Burundi, Tanzania and Rwanda as part of the preparations for an anticipated post-conflict rehabilitation and reconstruction programme. Those activities reflected Habitat's determination to contribute effectively to the United Nations response to challenges in the field of humanitarian assistance and to coordinate its operations with other United Nations organizations and programmes.

Mrs. HORIUCHI (Japan) said that Japan believed that coordination of humanitarian assistance could be strengthened if cooperation and coordination between humanitarian agencies was improved. The revitalization of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee thus was essential, and the ability of the Department of Humanitarian Affairs to coordinate must be further enhanced. Japan, however, strongly opposed the idea of making that Department an implementing agency with operational responsibility in the field.

With reference to coordination of rapid response to emergencies, situations sometimes arose in which no humanitarian agency was on the scene. The question of how to respond before the operational agencies began their work must be addressed on an urgent basis. The Department should withdraw from activity at the field level once the operational agencies began their work and a lead agency was appointed. Her delegation requested further information on the problem of rapid response and issues related to field coordination.

Japan hoped that CERF would be utilized effectively under the conditions laid down in General Assembly resolution 48/57. The desirability of increasing the resources available to the Fund should be further explored, and discussion should continue on how to utilize the Fund effectively and increase utilization of reserves or emergency funds of the operational agencies.

Mr. JOHNSON-SIRLEAF (United Nations Development Programme), referring to the remarks by the new Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and UNDP statements in the Inter-Agency Standing Committee and the Joint Consultative Group on Policy (JCGP), affirmed the Programme's commitment to strengthening the resident coordinator system. To that end, it would make every effort to ensure the recruitment of top candidates from a wider pool of applicants, including those from other agencies of the United Nations system. The selection process would be efficient and transparent. It would take place in consultation with the JCGP agencies and with the Department of Humanitarian Affairs in the case of emergency countries. Where a resident coordinator proved to be unsuitable - as in the case of Rwanda - a replacement would be found with a minimum of delay. If a suitable candidate could not be identified, the Emergency Relief Coordinator would appoint a separate humanitarian coordinator, who, if appropriate, would also become the resident coordinator. That process was consistent with General Assembly resolutions 46/182, 47/199 and 48/209, which formed the basis for coordination of

(Mr. Johnson-Sirleaf)

United Nations system operations at the field level. It was also consistent with the agreed conclusions of the 1993 coordination segment of the Council, which named the United Nations Resident Coordinator and the disaster management team as the first line of response to disasters and emergencies. UNDP agreed with the statements on coordination at the field level contained in the report of the Secretary-General (A/49/177-E/1994/80, para. 12).

The fundamental causes of complex emergencies were developmental in nature - the weakening of institutions, the absence of opportunities for sustainable livelihoods and the need for improved management at the grass-roots level. Emergency assistance was the short-term solution, but the only long-term solution was development assistance. Short-term budgetary support provided by emergency assistance ultimately weakened institutions. Emergency assistance also caused distortion of the labour and domestic commodities markets, which was another threat to long-term development. A balance must be struck between immediate and effective action and the participation of national and community-level institutions. The mobilization of resources, too, must focus not only on emergency relief assistance but also on rehabilitation and development needs. Agencies empowered to assess relief requirements should learn to assess development and rehabilitation needs as well.

In cooperation with the Department of Humanitarian Assistance, UNDP had been providing disaster-management training to its own staff, to the senior staff of other United Nations agencies and bilateral agencies and to national officials and experts. In certain cases, it was using its own indicative planning figures and special programme resources for emergency-related capacity-building.

Mr. LANGENBACHER (Observer for Switzerland) said that the report of the Secretary-General must be considered in the light of the ongoing reorganization of the Department of Humanitarian Affairs at the Headquarters level between New York and Geneva. Switzerland hoped that that process would continue to be guided by the relevant resolutions and decisions of the General Assembly and of the Council, which named the Inter-Agency Standing Committee as the coordinating body in emergencies. It was also to be hoped that IASC could deal effectively with complex emergencies and that it would not be necessary to create large-scale structures in New York, which would involve the Department of Humanitarian Affairs in operations. As most of the

(Mr. Langenbacher, Switzerland)

humanitarian agencies were located in Geneva, the Department remained responsible for coordinating operational activities both in Geneva and in the field.

Further attention must be focused on coordination at the field level. Based on the relevant General Assembly resolutions, he assumed that the humanitarian coordinator would function as, or report to, the Resident Coordinator. The Department of Humanitarian Affairs would have to seek the cooperation of UNDP and the IASC humanitarian agencies in recruiting the most qualified candidates. Common rosters and pools of qualified candidates and joint training programmes would be vital to the process.

With regard to the continuum to development ensured by coordination between the resident coordinator system and humanitarian operations, Switzerland was looking forward to the conclusions of the IASC task force on the consolidated appeal process. That study and UNDP studies on the topic should be aimed at closer coordination among the resident coordinator system, operational activities for development and the humanitarian activities of the United Nations system. Improved reporting on the progress of humanitarian operations and regular financial tracking under the consolidated appeal system could enhance donor financing. That, in turn, would enable agencies to refund advances received from CERF. A thorough review of the consolidated appeal process and CERF and their mutual relationship should be undertaken before considering an increase in CERF resources.

Mr. PETERS (Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)) said that coordination mechanisms should be as lean as possible. The proliferation of inter-agency coordinating bodies, committees, working groups and task forces and their extensive agendas could actually reduce the effectiveness of field activities. Coordination structures must also be adapted to specific situations; the situation on the ground should determine the roles played by the resident coordinator, the humanitarian coordinator and the specific agencies. UNHCR, as coordinator of emergency assistance, fully supported the proposals concerning field-level coordination mechanisms put forward by the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs. The viability of that proposal had been demonstrated by the model adopted in response to the Rwanda crisis. A clear division of labour, on the basis of each agency's comparative advantages, would ensure complementarity.

(Mr. Peters)

In the case of complex emergencies, procedures for establishing the division of labour at the early stages must be strengthened.

He stressed the link between humanitarian relief and development; UNHCR often found itself in situations where it could find no suitable partner for developmental assistance. The strengthening of emergency development capacity would ensure a more rapid phasing out of relief operations and the effectiveness of the relief-to-development continuum. In Mozambique and Afghanistan, for example, operational activities agencies could ensure that the process of reconciliation and return was consolidated through sustained reintegration assistance.

UNHCR was also concerned about the relationship between humanitarian action and political and peace-keeping initiatives. Recent Security Council resolutions had resulted in a greater number of integrated operations, involving political observers, peace-keeping forces and humanitarian agencies. Improved channels of communication and early communication among all actors were essential to safeguarding the independent, impartial nature of humanitarian assistance.

Mr. HAMAD (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)) mentioned a number of innovations introduced at UNESCO, at both the programme and the programme support levels, which would enhance its response capacity. At the programme level, a unit for the education of refugees and the reconstruction and rehabilitation of educational systems had been established in close cooperation with UNHCR. An emergency operations unit had been established at the programme support level in order to mobilize the various programmes units of UNESCO in emergency situations.

UNESCO welcomed the growing support for the principle that emergency action should always be closely linked to aid, rehabilitation and development, of which training was a necessary component. UNESCO welcomed the stress laid on training and on the further development of the Disaster Management Training Programme in the agreed conclusions of 1993. It hoped that those guidelines would be translated into concrete action.

There was ample room for improvement in the education component of the consolidated appeal process under the agreed conclusions of 1993. Education was not a ready-made kit but rather a process over time which required input from many different sources. The appeal framework, on the other hand, had a

(Mr. Hamad)

short duration, involved minimal consultation and prior study and required proposals to be immediately operational. UNESCO was planning to develop a simple topology of conflicts which would enable it to design a mobile strategy applicable to a wide range of emergency situations. Together with the Humanitarian Early Warning System, in which UNESCO was a full participant, the topology would facilitate the timely planning and provision of educational services as part of humanitarian assistance.

Mr. Kwang-Jae LEE (Republic of Korea) said that his delegation welcomed the efforts made by the United Nations system to enhance coordination of humanitarian and disaster relief assistance and the joint efforts of Japan and the United Nations in the convening of the World Conference on Natural Disaster Reduction. While the Inter-Agency Standing Committee was essential for resource mobilization, the transition from relief to development and the consolidated appeal process, United Nations resident coordinators must be given greater authority to handle emergencies at the field level. The Department of Humanitarian Affairs was to be commended on initiating the International Emergency Readiness and Response Information System (IERRIS) and its work on the Humanitarian Early Warning System (HEWS). A regional early warning network, which would do much to enhance the Organization's response capacity and its efficient use of resources, should also be consiuered.

In order to ensure the availability of resources for the transition from relief to development and capacity-building in affected countries, a consultative mechanism should be established among United Nations development assistance organizations, including the Bretton Woods institutions and other international funding institutions. In conclusion, measures should be taken for the protection and security of relief personnel working at emergency sites. His delegation wished to pay tribute to all humanitarian relief organizations, in particular the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and Médecins sans Frontières.

Mr. SANDOZ (International Committee of the Red Cross) stressed that coherence and cohesion were a more urgent priority than the development of coordination techniques. The flouting of all principles of decency int eh terrible conflicts of Rwanda, Somalia, Angola, Afghanistan, the former Yugoslavia and Azerbaijan had highlighted the need for political action by the international community in addition to financial support.

(Mr. Sandoz)

ICRC had recently organized a symposium on humanitarian action and peace-keeping. The symposium had brought together experts with practical experience or legal knowledge to consider specific examples of the relationship between United Nations peace-keeping operations and the activities of humanitarian organizations. It had been designed as a task for identifying problems and defining responsibilities more clearly.

It would also be vital to define other activities more clearly, including those relating to land-mines and internally displaced persons. The report of the Representative of the Secretary-General on internally displaced persons should contribute to an understanding of the causes and effects of that problem. ICRC would continue to fulfil its mandate of protecting and assisting all war victims and displaced persons with the support of, inter alia, national Red Cross and Red Crescent societies.

ICRC welcomed the designation of the Department of Humanitarian Affairs as the focal point for land-mine-related activities. ICRC was preparing expert reports in connection with the revision of the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects (and the Protocols) of 1980 and was launching a large-scale awareness-building campaign through national Red Cross and Red Crescent societies. ICRC welcomed the fact that land-mine-related problems were addressed in the report of the Secretary-General (A/49/177-E/1994/80). It stressed the importance of the follow-up to the International Conference for the Protection of War Victims and the International Conference of the Red Cross and the Red Crescent scheduled for 1995.

While coordination mechanisms must be adapted to changing circumstances, certain basic criteria should be constant - or credibility and effectiveness would be sacrificed. In that connection, ICRC fully shared the concerns of the Department of Humanitarian Affairs and the Inter-Agency Standing Committee about the need to clarify roles and mandates and to mobilize resources. ICRC would fulfil its own responsibility for ensuring the coordination of Red Cross and the Red Crescent societies at the international level and for providing overall leadership for international activities in situations of armed conflict or internal strife. It would strengthen the coherence of the activities of non-governmental organizations by, inter alia, promoting a code of conduct elaborated with input from a number of non-governmental organizations.

(Mr. Sandoz)

ICRC was concerned about the mobilization of resources. It had provided data for the consolidated appeal of the Department of Humanitarian Affairs and had recently issued a quarterly statement on the financing of its activities. In conclusion, the effectiveness of emergency humanitarian assistance depended largely on the international community's commitment to the values embodied in the "new international morality for development" advocated by the Secretary-General.

Mr. CHEN Jian Ping (China) said that, while his delegation was pleased that coordination of emergency assistance in the United Nations system had improved and the Organization's capacity to respond to emergencies had been further strengthened, it was extremely concerned at the frequency with which disasters had struck in the past year, causing tremendous losses of life and damage to property in the countries and regions affected, especially in developing countries. Faced with an increasing number of unforeseen disasters, the United Nations system had been put to a severe test and had fallen short of its own expectations.

In dealing with disaster relief, the Department of Humanitarian Affairs had continued to concentrate on providing relief in cases of man-made disasters and had not placed enough emphasis on emergency assistance for natural disasters. His delegation hoped that the Department would study effective ways and means of providing emergency relief to victims of natural disasters, especially sudden, unforeseen disasters. It also hoped that, as part of the activities of the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction, the Department would study ways of enhancing the capacity of developing countries to combat natural disasters.

The lack of relief resources, a shortage of non-food aid and the imposition of conditions by countries providing food aid had seriously affected humanitarian emergency assistance of the United Nations. His delegation supported the Department's efforts to resolve all those problems and appealed to countries in a position to do so to provide additional assistance to developing countries stricken by disasters.

In accordance with General Assembly resolutions 46/182 and 47/199, under normal conditions the resident coordinator should be responsible for coordinating work at the country level, and special requests made by the Department of Humanitarian Affairs should be dealt with on the basis of those resolutions.

Mr. MARTYNENKO (Ukraine) said that the considerable increase in the number and scale of recent emergency situations called for concrete measures at the international level to coordinate humanitarian assistance. In that regard, the United Nations system should continue its efforts to adopt a more coordinated approach in its response to humanitarian emergency situations, both for relief and for the continuum to development. On the whole, his delegation shared the major conclusions and recommendations contained in the Secretary-General's report on the strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations (A/49/177-E/1994/80).

In spite of many difficulties, the Department of Humanitarian Affairs had succeeded in improving coordination of humanitarian assistance and strengthening cooperation among the organizations and agencies of the United Nations system in their response to complex emergency situations. At the same time, his delegation was concerned that the United Nations continued to face a serious shortfall of financial and human resources needed to ensure an adequate response to the growing number of natural disasters and emergency situations. The continuum from emergency relief to rehabilitation and development should become a reality and receive adequate financing. On the whole, his delegation supported the relevant recommendations contained in the Secretary-General's report.

Serious consideration should be given to ways of increasing the resources of the Central Emergency Revolving Fund. Sources of financing should be found for developing humanitarian operations at the initial stage, provided that contributions to such activities continued to be made on a voluntary basis.

The Department of Humanitarian Affairs should also strengthen its cooperation with UNDP, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the Bretton Woods institutions. That would help to solve the financial problem of strengthening the single unified approach to the humanitarian activities of agencies of the United Nations system. In addition, greater use should be made of the potential of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee.

In order to ensure the effectiveness of emergency assistance and achieve positive results, such activities should be constantly and strictly monitored.

(Mr. Martynenko, Ukraine)

That would help avoid unjustified expenditures and the duplication of activities. The Department should therefore attach greater attention to questions of inspection and control.

With respect to section III (C) of the Secretary-General's report (A/49/177-E/1994/80), his delegation wished to point out that the question of the negative effect of sanctions on "vulnerable groups in the target country" had not been sufficiently clarified, since section III dealt only with vulnerable groups of the population in countries against which sanctions had been imposed. At the same time, vulnerable groups in countries applying such sanctions also suffered from the unintended negative effects of sanctions. The inter-agency task force established by IASC to undertake a comprehensive study on the impact of sanctions should consider that aspect of the problem.

Ms. JOPLING (World Food Programme (WFP)) said that food aid was a major resource and amounted to more than two thirds of overall relief contributions. The World Food Programme was extensively involved in providing emergency assistance to African countries, including Rwanda, Burundi, Angola, the Liberia and Sierra Leone region, southern Sudan and Somalia. In those and other emergencies, the Programme had increasingly emphasized the key concerns raised in the Economic and Social Council's agreed conclusions and in the Secretary-General's report (A/49/177-E/1994/80), especially the promotion of more coherent and timely emergency responses.

WFP had been an active partner in coordination structures led by the Department of Humanitarian Affairs and had drawn on the Central Emergency Revolving Fund for emergency relief response in a number of countries, most recently in Tajikistan, Iraq and Burundi. In order to facilitate cooperation, two senior WFP emergency staff had been assigned to the Department's offices in Geneva and New York since 1992. At the field level, WFP had supported the work of the resident coordinators and disaster management teams. It had also assisted humanitarian assistance coordinators and supported the lead-agency concept in countries such as the former Yugoslavia and Angola.

WFP was already an important contributor to the early warning system of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) through its network of country offices and regular monthly consultations. In addition, the Programme was developing a vulnerability-mapping capacity, and would contribute to the coordination of food aid allocations and deliveries by collecting, analysing and disseminating information on worldwide food aid flows and requirements.

(Mrs. Jopling)

In 1992, WFP had set up an Immediate Response Account - a $30 million cash facility to fund initial food purchases. An emergency response capacity had also been enhanced through the establishment of Rapid Response Teams, the first of which had been deployed in Burundi early in 1994.

The Programme had been a partner in joint needs assessment missions and had contributed to the consolidated appeals process. Because of its highly operational role, particularly in the area of delivery of essential food supplies in situations of conflict and civil strife, WFP was currently facing many new challenges posed by complex emergency situations. The Programme had offered its full support to de-mining, demobilization and the internally displaced.

As a relief, rehabilitation and development agency, WFP was involved in all phases of the continuum. That role had been further emphasized by close involvement in refugee feeding programmes and repatriation operations. The ability to follow through the initial relief phase with rehabilitation and development assistance was expected to improve the effectiveness of WFP assistance programmes. The focus on the continuum from relief to development was being enhanced through improved prevention and preparedness and training.

The dramatic increase in the number of refugees and displaced persons as a result of civil strife and conflicts was placing major constraints on the availability of WFP relief resources. While much was being done to improve the Programme's emergency response, issues such as improved flexibility in contributions to the International Emergency Food Reserve and higher level of funding of the Immediate Response Account would continue to be determining factors in enhancing the overall relief response.

Mr. AHMED (Economic Commission for Africa (ECA)) said that ethnic conflict, civil war and the displacement of hundreds of thousands of persons were impeding the development efforts of African countries. The Economic Commission for Africa was uniquely qualified among African organizations to coordinate the post-conflict peace-building component of "An Agenda for Peace". In the context of its cooperation with regional organizations, it could collect data relating to potential emergency situations and information for future rehabilitation and development. Humanitarian assistance must conform to a macroeconomic framework such as the Master Plan for Economic and Social Rehabilitation and Reconstruction. Such assistance must no serve as a substitute for development, cooperation and integration at the regional and subregional levels, which must form part of the continuum.

(Mr. Ahmed)

Planning must take place with the active participation of the national actors who would ultimately implement and evaluate the Master Plan. The problem, however, was that African mechanisms for responding to African emergencies did not yet exist. The relevance of the United Nations system, ECA and the Department of Humanitarian Affairs in Africa would be determined by how effectively the Commission and the Department could respond to complex emergencies in the region and, subsequently, promote development.

In 1993, ECA had prepared a report entitled "Agenda on Emergency, Humanitarian, Rehabilitation and Reconstruction Affairs in Africa", setting forth its strategy for the 1990s and beyond. Master plans had been formulated for the rehabilitation and reconstruction of Somalia, Eritrea, Rwanda, Burundi, Mozambique and Ethiopia. In that connection, the Commission was coordinating with the bureaux of UNDP the Department of Humanitarian Affairs, other agencies for operational activities, non-governmental organizations and national authorities. ECA had been using its own resources to send missions to countries in order to prepare master plans. Perhaps additional financial resources for its initiative could be obtained within the framework of donor pledges for each country.

Mr. NEBENZYA (Russian Federation) said that progress had been made in uniting the efforts of organizations involved in humanitarian operations, enhancing the coordinating role of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee and maximizing the potential of consolidated appeals. At the same time, it was necessary to strengthen transparency and feedback between IASC and Member States.

The issues dealt with in section III of the Secretary-General's report (A/49/177-E/1994/80) offered food for thought for various United Nations bodies, including the Security Council, and also provided for closer interaction between the Department of Humanitarian Affairs, the Department of Peace-keeping Operations and the Department of Political Affairs. In particular, his delegation commended the section on the unintended effects of United Nations actions, particularly since the Russian Federation had been one of the first countries to draw the international community's attention to that problem. In particular, his delegation welcomed the establishment of an Inter-Agency Task Force to undertake a comprehensive study on the impact of sanctions.

(Mr. Nebenzya, Russian Federation)

The sections of the report dealing with appropriate and timely humanitarian response and coordination at the field level required additional work. The proposals made by the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs on models for organizing coordination in the field during the conduct of humanitarian emergency operations were interesting, and his delegation hoped that the Inter-Agency Standing Committee would be able to submit its comprehensive views on the matter by the beginning of the forty-ninth session of the General Assembly.

The Central Emergency Revolving Fund was already unable to meet the growing requirements of humanitarian crises. The time had come to develop a more effective strategy for mobilizing resources, taking into account the objective realities involved in the replenishment and reimbursement of the resources that executing agencies borrowed from the Central Emergency Revolving Fund. Resources from traditional donors were no longer adequate, and his delegation therefore supported the idea of mobilizing resources from Governments that were not usually considered as donors, and also from such non-traditional donors as defence establishments and the private sector.

Those problems were closely related to the important task of ensuring social and economic rehabilitation and peaceful development in the post-conflict period. The United Nations, and in particular the Department of Humanitarian Affairs, could and should play a serious role in establishing cooperation in those fields with a view to ensuring sustainable development.

Mr. MOHAMED (Observer for the Sudan) said that humanitarian assistance had nothing to do with politics and should never be used for political purposes. His delegation reaffirmed the Sudanese Government's commitment to bring food to all its citizens, not to use food as a weapon and to continue to observe the principles of integrity and neutrality.

In its resolution 48/57, the General Assembly called upon States to respond to consolidated appeals for humanitarian assistance, taking into account rehabilitation and long-term development requirements. In that connection, his delegation supported the building of national capacities in the area of humanitarian emergency assistance in order to enable the affected countries to predict emergencies and avoid their recurrence. It was also necessary to ensure the rehabilitation of the infrastructures of affected countries in order to move from humanitarian emergency assistance to long-term development.

(Mr. Mohamed, Sudan)

With regard to the coordination of humanitarian emergency assistance at the field level, his delegation reaffirmed the principles of territorial sovereignty and non-interference in the internal affairs of States. Some non-governmental organizations working in the Sudan had their own specific agendas that they were endeavouring to implement without any respect for the laws and conventions of the host State. In the view of his delegation, there was no reason for having a formal umbrella to protect organizations that were not committed to the laws of the host State.

The Sudanese Government had taken measures to facilitate the process of humanitarian assistance operations and increase their effectiveness. In particular, the Sudan had showed its cooperation by increasing land, sea and air corridors. Some parties to the Nairobi negotiations, held in May 1994, had committed flagrant violations, in particular through their support of rebel factions. His delegation called upon all parties to condemn the rebel movement in the Sudan and not to blame the Sudanese Government, which was working very hard to bring food to its citizens.

His delegation supported the Secretary-General's proposal to enhance and increase the Central Emergency Revolving Fund in order to enable the Department of Humanitarian Affairs and the United Nations to respond quickly and immediately to emergency situations.

Mr. CAMARA (Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations) said that FAO recognized the leading role of the Department of Humanitarian Affairs in coordinating inter-agency needs assessment missions, preparing consolidated appeals and coordinating emergency operations at the field level. While missions led by the Department focused on the immediate requirements of targeted beneficiaries, FAO/WFP assessments provided the overall food and agriculture context in which a complex emergency occurred and from which an affected population might or might not have access to relief. Such assessments revealed sources of food supply, including imports; deficit and surplus areas; the food habits and nutritional status of the population; alternative foods; prices and trends of basic foods; and the crop situation and prospects.

A constant feature of the consolidated appeals was that agricultural rehabilitation was the most underfunded item in spite of the act that, when agricultural rehabilitation was not begun as soon as possible, no basis was

(Mr. Camara)

laid for avoiding a crisis the following year. That was a major factor that led to escalating costs and recurrent emergencies. In order to have long-term results, emergency assistance must be part of a coordinated structure of relief, rehabilitation and long-term development. Emergency assistance should be provided in a manner that would be supportive of recovery and sustainable development. So far, it had been extremely difficult to obtain the resources needed to implement agricultural rehabilitation programmes in affected countries.

It was necessary to define the links between rehabilitation and the potential emergency food needs of the next crop season, in the light of development prospects in the shorter and longer term. It was obvious that the financial resources that would be required to meet future food aid needs and implement sustainable development programmes and projects would be much higher if insufficient support was given to agricultural relief and rehabilitation. The costs of meeting those essential needs were relatively insignificant compared with the cost of providing food for recurrent emergencies. In the final analysis, agricultural rehabilitation was a prerequisite for the cost-effective use of resources for development of the sector.

The meeting rose at 1.15 p.m.